UNITARIAN MONTHLY

No. 204. (Vol. XVII—9). SEPTEMBER, 1920. ONE PENNY.

This Magazine Proclaims the Importance of Theology.

RELIGION is of first importance, but theology is necessary, for there is no religion without it. There are many theologies and only one religion, for theology is not religion, --it is a statement of religious doctrine.

Theology is important as an expression of definite conviction, or of religious belief,—and because it decides what the religious attitude is. The theology that means belief in a tyrant-God, creates a sense of dread and fear in prayer and worship, and a gloomy outlook upon the whole world.

A theology of belief in God as THE EVERLASTING FRIEND, inspires a feeling of joyous trust. A grand theology makes possible a correspondingly noble kind of worship.

A beautiful religious faith produces a condition of serene and cheerful confidence through all the experiences of life.

It is of great importance that the theology should be the noblest, the most magnanimous possible for the human mind to conceive, for it is belief that makes character,—what a man thinks so he is. By free inquiry Unitarian Christianity has found in Jesus the beautiful belief that **nothing too good can be said of God,** or of the divine possibilities and destiny of every human soul, and that **nothing is too good to be true.**

This Glad Tidings cannot be too definite and clear, as a message to inspire the missionary zeal, which can convert the world.

M.B.

Notes and News.

At one of the meetings of the Roman Catholic Congress at Liverpool, July 31st, a speaker said: "We have been staggered at the audacity of what now terms itself Free Catholicism, or Catholicism without the Pope. Yet, assuredly, we have all realised that this fantastic movement can have but one conclusion: they are leavening precisely the middle classes with Catholicism."

The Wolverhampton All Souls Unitarian Church has been seriously damaged by fire, the organ completely destroyed.

The special appeal for £20,000 to increase the stipends of Unitarian ministers, and to assist the education of their children has successfully realised the total of £20,105 10s. 0d.

Rev. Sydney Snow, of Boston, U.S.A., delegated by the American Unitarian Association has visited 105 Unitarian Churches in Transylvania.

Miss Grace Durning Holt, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Durning Holt, of Liverpool, was married at Rosslyn Hill (Unitarian) Chapel, Hampstead, July 15th, to Captain A. Methuen, second son of Lord Methuen.

The timbers of the "Mayflower" are said to have been discovered by Dr. Rendel Harris in a barn at Jordans, Chalfont St. Giles.

There is a movement described as a campaign to secure the making of Easter a fixture instead of a movable date.

Statues of Abraham Lincoln have been unveiled at Westminster and Manchester. His greatness is increasingly appreciated.

The women magistrates appointed include well-known Unitarians: Mrs. Grosvenor Talbot, Leeds; Mrs. Lindsey Cropper and Mrs. Frank Taylor, Bolton; Mrs. Dodd, St. Helen's; and other names not to hand.

Rev. Dr. S. A. Eliot, President, American Unitarian Association, is on a visit to Europe, and on Sunday, August 8th, he preached eloquently at High Pavement, Nottingham, to large congregations; on August 15th he and Mrs. Eliot met members of the Council of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association at Essex Hall, London.

Rev. Thomas Paxton, of Scarborough, has published a Calendar and Year Book of his church in the form of a blotter, for general circulation, with picture of the church and likeness of the minister on the cover.

Mr. Fred Clayton, of Mill Hill Chapel, Leeds, was made the recipient of a present from the directors and staff of the "Yorkshire Post," July 24th, in recognition of fifty years' service.

Rev. Henry Williamson, Dundee, in referring to the death of Mrs. J. K. Wood, recently of Dundee, but latterly of Manchester, said she regularly undertook to distribute copies of the "Unitarian Monthly" by visits to members. A worthy example.

Sir Edward Chatfield Clarke, who has been Treasurer and President of Sustentation Fund for Unitarian Ministers, and who is now Treasurer of the Pension Fund, and a member of the Newport Unitarian Congregation, is appointed Deputy Governor of the Isle of Wight, H.R.H. Princess Beatrice being the Governor.

Sir John Brunner, President of the National Unitarian Temperance Association, strongly advocated a gift of £100,000 by his firm of Brunner, Mond, and Co., for the promotion of scientific research at universities and other institutions, which the shareholders have sanctioned.

Unitarian work in Florence, Italy, is actively carried on by Professor Mario Puglisi, who gives lectures and carries on the correspondence of a postal mission.

At Hull, an able Methodist lay preacher has turned Untitarian and has occupied the pulpit of the Unitarian Church most acceptably during the minister's holidays. Mrs. Ewbank, wife of the Padiham Unitarian Minister, and sister of the Rev. Lawrence Redfern, M.A. B.D., of Liverpool, has preached most acceptably at Newchurch.

MINISTERIAL CHANGES: Rev. F. Cottier has been publicly welcomed at Brookfield Church, Gorton; Rev. A. H. Biggs, M.A., LL.M., is appointed to the Highgate Unitarian Church for twelve months; Rev. J. Pipkin has concluded his ministry at Colne; Rev. Arnold H. Lewis, B.A. B.D., has entered upon his ministry at Unity Church, Bolton.

DEATHS: Mr. Thos. W. Pickering, Wakefield, June 29th, 53; Miss Katherine H. Greg, Westmill, formerly of Styal, July 15th; Prof. P. E. Richards, formerly Unitarian minister, June 4th, at Lahore, India; Rev. S. Thompson, Rivington, July 20th, 85; Mrs. James Barnes, Greyabbey, July 27th, 92; Mr. John Sharples, Swinton, July 25th, 69; Marion Dora, wife of Dr. J. K. Wood, Brooklands, Manchester July 19th, 42; Mrs. Eliza Leys, of Fulham, formerly of Fallowfield, Manchester, at Buenos Ayres, July 14th; Mr. Peter Blundell, Hindley, July 26th, 65; Miss Sarah Simpson, of Nantwich, at Rhyl, July 20th, 62; Mrs. David Williams, Llysfaen, North Wales, August 4th, 86; Miss Florence Hughes, late of Woodsetton, at Paignton, July 25th; Mary E. Jones, of Llandudno, at Hampstead, July 28th, 86; Mrs. Thomas Worthington, Northenden, August 4th. 85; Mr. Alfred Beckett, Sheffield. August 4th, 72; Mrs. A. G. Pritchard, Hampstead, August 6th; Mr. R. B. Byles, Richmond, August 8th; Mrs. P. M. Martineau, Esher, August 11th. 82

GRANT US THY LIGHT!

Grant us thy light, that we may know
The wisdom thou alone canst give;
That truth may guide where'er we go,
And virtue bless where'er we live.

Grant us thy light, that we may see
Where error lurks in human lore,
And turn our doubting minds to thee,
And love thy simple word the more.

Grant us thy light, that we may learn
How dead is life from thee apart;
How sure is joy for all who turn
To thee an undivided heart.

Grant us thy light, in grief and pain,
To lift our burdened heart above;
And count the very cross a gain,
And bless our Father's hidden love.

Grant us thy light, when, soon or late,
All earthly scenes shall pass away,
In thee to find the open gate
To deathless home and endless day.

—L. Tuttiett.

Is Christianity Practical?

THE Lindsey Press has just issued from Essex Hall, 3s. net, a reprint of addresses by Dr. Philip H. Wicksteed, M.A., entitled, "Is Christianity Practical?"—first published in 1885. Though that was 35 years ago what Dr. Wicksteed says is quite as necessary now as it was then. The recent war was proof enough that the ruling authorities of the world answered Dr. Wicksteed's question in the negative. And there are signs to-day that still many people in all countries, including our own, are not prepared to meet it with an affirmative. The republication is timely and opportune. "Would Christianity, as a scheme, or principle of human conduct, work?" is the pertinent query of the book. But what does the author mean by Christianity? His answer is this: "Christian belief—in the sense of God's fatherhood, carrying with it the sense of the infinite dignity of human nature, the infinite worth of every human soul." In its application to society, he says that "if the use of physical force in the defence of private or public right is contrary to the principle of Christianity, then I cannot see that Christianity is in the least degree practical, or that society can be organised upon Christian principles." But he does not admit that Christianity is contrary to the use of physical force,—he insists rather that the force should be Christianised. Force, he says, cannot be dispensed with, but just in proportion as it is Christianised will it become practical and serve its social purpose (p. 32). "The true method of social reform is from within outwards"; "from within outwards go the forces of social and political life"; "the people make the institutions rather than that the institutions make the people" (62); "reformed institutions might do some little good, but the unreformed people would soon corrupt them"; "the reformed people would quickly reform its own institutions"; so we must reform the people first (61): "Christianity is a principle of life, its field is as wide as our relations to God and man, and it applies directly and clearly to politics" (65).

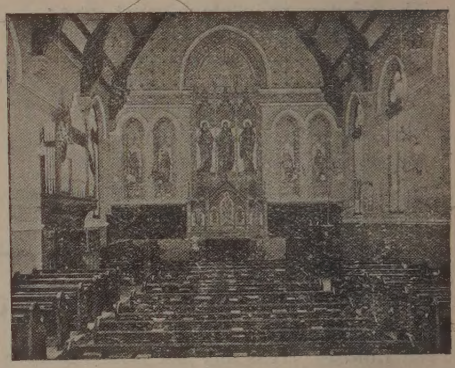
As to the problem of war, Dr. Wicksteed refers again to the use of force, and has no hesitation in saying "If Christianity unconditionally condemns the appeal of force, it is unpractical, and, therefore, misleading. But I do not think that it does. If force is never used to attack but always to defend the right, if it is purged of every trace of vengeance, if it is generous as well as just in its purpose—in a word, if it is socialised and Christianised,—then it appears to me to take its place amongst the instruments of true progress and to need no apology, though it will always need the strictest discipline."

"If this reasoning be sound, and if the instincts that lie behind it are true, then we must face the conclusion that Christianity does not unconditionally and absolutely condemn war" (70).

"Is it desirable and practical to keep permanently open to all a fair chance of securing by their own efforts a life of decency and comfort? That depends upon whether there is enough for all" (86). "There is room for all. It is not the will of our Father that one of the little ones should perish. Whenever we have tried the Christian principle of life, it has shown itself to be practical above all others" (92). Dr. Wicksteed tests the matter by appeal to personal life, social life, to trade and politics, and to the bountifulness of nature, his final conclusion being that the ghastly doctrines of elimination should be cast away, and the Christian idea of redemption—to seek and to save—should be proclaimed as the really practical doctrine. There is an informing note at the end of the book on "The Population Question."

It is significant and remarkable that Unitarian writers of books recently issued, bearing on Christianity and modern life, do so thoroughly agree that society must be re-constructed upon Christian principles, each defending Christianity (as Jesus declared it) as the most practical thing. We urge our readers to get Dr. Wicksteed's book.

Scarborough Unitarian Church.



THE Unitarian Church at Scarborough is situated in the Westborough quarter. The congregation originated in 1873, and the present building was opened in 1877. Rev. J. Crowther Hirst was the first minister; Rev. Dendy Agate, B.A., was minister 1878—82, followed by Revs. D. Amos; Fletcher Williams; E. L. H. Thomas, B.A., 1893—1900. O. Binns, 1901—8; J. Wain, 1909—17; and the present minister, Rev. T. Paxton, who entered upon the charge in 1918, after having pastorates at South Shields, Newhall Hill, Birmingham, and Chapel Lane, Bradford.

Scarborough, being a popular seaside resort, the handsome church is well-known to many Unitarians from other towns. Visitors are always very welcome at the services, and Unitarians are naturally expected to be loyal to their faith and not neglect to unite with their fellow religionists in their Sunday services, and to give them the encouragement of their presence.

BACK TO THE GOSPEL OF JESUS.

9.—COVETOUSNESS. By the Rev. WILLIAM C. HALL, M.A.

WE need go no farther than our Bibles to learn that one of the primary safeguards of society, however, primitive, is restraint on covetousness. So we learn as we read the story of Abram and Lot, and, indeed, the earlier story of Eve's temptation. So, too, we learn as we read the Ten Commandments; and it is remarkable that of these the commandment against covetousness is one of the most emphatic and specific. And more and more, as we read on through the history of Israel, we see the necessity of this restraint.

Jesus comes; and as we read the Gospels we learn how often he found it necessary to rebuke people, even his disciples, for their covetousness. He would find it necessary to-day. Our society, civilised, as we call it, and Christian, as we think it, never needed more the warning he uttered against the covetous man who said unto him, "Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me."

"Thou shalt not covet,"—that is, Thou shalt not desire and seek to obtain what is thy neighbour's, is a commandment for which the observance of all classes is required—for of what class to-day can we say that it is untainted of the vice of covetousness? — and on behalf of which the parable of Jesus is to be retold, that in seeking material good, even when it involves no robbery of others, as man, a class, or a nation, may miss the good of life.

There can be no ordered society where there is covetousness, and no life worth calling human. So long as men ask "What can we get?" instead of "What can we give?" there must be confusion. And where the aim of men, whether in getting or giving, is the distribution of material things only, there cannot be happiness that satisfies. Be not so anxious concerning these things, said Jesus; and Paul said, Desire earnestly the greater gifts and the more excellent way of love.

The Right. Hon. A. M. Carlisle, of Belfast, who interrupted the House of Lords discussion of the Coercion Bill, on August 9th, comes of a good Unitarian stock.

For the Children.

By the Rev. H. Fisher Short.

A KING WITH A SILVER CROWN.

"With a whack and a smack on his knee,
The monarch sang out in his glee:

'To keep out the weather,
Or tramp o'er the heather,
There's nothing like leather;
So, sing all together,—
Oh! leather! real leather for me.'"

"Funny?" What's funny? Oh, I see, you think I've mixed things up a bit? "But kings aren't cobblers!" Perhaps not, but cobblers are sometimes kings, and I am going to tell about one of them. Once upon a time there was a king who had a kingdom; also he had a son. His crown was not of gold: it was gradually becoming silver. His palace was a cobbler's shop; his throne, a kitchen chair without a back; his sceptre, a shining hammer. Of the prince, he was awfully proud; and not without reason, for he was a handsome prince. Tall for his age, straight as a rush, with the head and face of an Apollo; he was the apple of his father's eye. From morning till night the king worked for his son. With the money so hardly earned he clothed the lad in beautiful garments, he fed him with choice viands, and, with loving pride, made a smooth path for his feet.

"You must have a better time than your father has had," he would remark almost every day. "Cobbling is all right for me; but it isn't good enough for you; you are a born gentleman my boy, and a gentleman you shall be."

One day, with many a "God bless you," the loving king sent the prince to an academy in a distant kingdom where he remained for several years. How the king worked in the lad's absence! How he sang! And how he longed for the day when the prince should return—refined, cultured, handsomer than ever, and every inch a gentleman. At last, the great day arrived. At noon the king knocked off work, and changed into his Sunday clothes. His crown was now shining silver. He prepared a feast of cakes and fruit and savoury meats. As tea-time drew near his heart beat faster and a happy flush covered his face. But how slow went the clock! "Ah! He'll be here soon," he laughed, when, at last, the clock struck four. He stirred the fire, kept the kettle on the boil, re-arranged the table, and, in between, scanned the street through the curtain. By and by, a change came over him. The clock was going too fast. Five o'clock! The smile faded from his face. Six o'clock! Anxiety seized him like a cold hand. Seven o'clock! The neglected fire went out. Weary and sick at heart, the king sat down, pondering, wondering, fearing. At ten o'clock there came a faint rap on the door. When no one entered the little hope that had faintly flickered up was quenched. With trembling fingers the king opened the door, and the sight that met his gaze went to his heart like a knife. Not a prince but a prodigal had returned. Shabby and unkempt and covered with shame, the prodigal sobbed, "Father, I have sinned; I am unworthy to be called your son; forgive me and let me go away." But the silver-crowned king was a king indeed.

"Come home, lad," he cried, as he drew him gently in, "the sin is mine. In my foolish pride I wanted to make you a gentleman; my love ought first to have made you a man."

NATIONAL UNITARIAN TEMPERANCE ASSOCIATION.

"The student of the diseases of society," says Dr. C. W. Saleeby, "finds himself confronted at every turn with alcohol; his particular interest may be crime, insanity, feeble-mindedness, racial degeneracy, vice,—but whichever it be, the trail of alcohol is over them all."

"Essentially and properly alcohol is a drug, and a poisonous drug. It is not needed by any healthy person; it tends to make more difficult the maintenance of health; its possibilities of use in disease are daily being more gravely questioned, the sole remaining one of any importance—that of action in fever—having lately been proved false by authoritative and absolutely unbiassed witnesses."

Professor William Osler has said that "the abolition of alcohol would at once abolish practically all the problems which now exercise physicians, philanthropists, and politicians."

One hundred and twenty thousand deaths due to alcoholism in this country annually is said to be a modest estimate, but even this means about one-sixth of all deaths, including the infant mortality. This is twice as much as the death rate of 60,000 from tuberculosis or consumption. But a great French physician has said that "alcoholism makes the bed of tuberculosis." Of patients dying from alcoholic neuritis, four out of five are found to have consumption. "Leading authorities both in France and in America estimate that about one-half of all cases of tuberculosis are due to alcohol. So in this country tens of thousands of deaths from consumption are caused by alcoholism, also an enormous number of deaths from pneumonia, not to mention other diseases.

Authorities tell us that alcoholic parents bequeath degenerate physical conditions to their children, and that many infants at the breasts of drinking mothers are killed by sucking alcohol with their milk. This means an awful responsibility in the parents.

Literature.

"The Parables of Jesus Applied to Modern Life," by J. Cyril Flower, M.A.,—foreword by L. P. Jacks, M.A., L.L.D., 3s. net. The Lindsey Press, 5, Essex Street, Strand, London, W.C.2.

Mr. Flower here gives us a helpful treatment of thirteen of the parables with an introductory chapter on the Teaching and the Disciples of Jesus. He brings out the spiritual meanings in a clear and graphic manner, and explains some parables which perplex most people—because in their present setting and as reported they are self contradictory and therefore hard to understand. This is especially so in the case of "The Unrighteous Steward," and also of "The Importunate Widow." In his comments under the heading of "Profession and Deed" he expresses the opinion that ritual is a sort of "play-acting" (28). "It is not what a man says, what he professes, what he denies, what ceremonies he performs or repudiates but what a man DOES that counts" (29). Like Dr. Mellor he rebels against the competitive system of society as un-Christian, and declares that "The continued existence of social conditions which encourage and tempt people at one end to sell their souls in order to fill their money-bags, and which enslaves people at the other end to an economic necessity of struggling and fighting to get enough to fill their bellies, is simply a manifest social rejection of the teaching of Jesus" (41). In his chapter on the Parable of the Labourers he says. "It may sound bad economics...it is not intended for economics. It is a lesson in the morals of religion" (39-40). There are some who think it is good economics, as doubtless Mr. Flower does, for good ethics are also good economics, and Jesus surely did intend the parable to teach economics in the highest sense.

The social, ethical, and theological significance of these parables is very suggestively expounded, notably in those of the Lost Sheep, the Lost Coin, and the Lost Son. The three books most recently noticed in these columns, viz., that by Mr. Travers Herford on Reconstruction, the other by Dr. Mellor, and this by Mr. Flower, all agree in the necessity of a change in the basis of society and of bringing it into conformity with Christian principle, and they might well be read as complementary to each other. Mr. Flower's book is a bit of good work, and will suffer nothing by comparison. As Dr. Jacks says in his interesting "Foreword,"—"Not the least interesting part of our experience in reading this book is to note the difference between the author's way of re-acting on the theme and our own."

Post Card Propaganda

What is Unitarianism?

UNITARIANS UNITE in the love of truth, in the spirit of Jesus Christ, for the worship of God and the service of man.

Unitarianism stands for belief in:

(1) THE UNITY OF GOD in ONE Person, the Universal Father, who is the sole Creator, and the only object of divine worship—and therefore not a Trinity.

(2) THE UNITY of MAN, all men being members one of another, dependent on each other, in each other's keeping, made to be ONE HUMANITY, and designed for universal brotherhood.

(3) THE UNITY OF MAN WITH GOD in one divine nature, man being the child of God, a partaker of the divine spirit, made to become perfect as God is perfect, and is essentially good and not naturally evil.

(4) THE UNITY OF LIFE here and hereafter, in one continued discipline, education and progress upward and onward for ever, man being immortal as God is immortal, and destined for the perfect life.

(5) THE UNITY OF SALVATION in one grand destiny for all men, by character and conduct. God's love ultimately winning all souls into complete fellowship with himself, so that not one shall be lost.

(6) THE UNITY OF TRUTH: UNITARIANISM is based upon the exercise of reason and the free search after truth; it is not under bondage to any fixed creed, is always open to receive new light and to adjust its statements of doctrine to accord therewith; for all Truth is one.

(7) THE UNITY OF RELIGION in one religion of every nation under many forms of faith,—the seeking after God's Kingdom and His righteousness in all human affairs.

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For 17 years, from 1903, its present Editor and proprietor, a Unitarian minister, has been alone responsible for its publication, and has carried on single-handed the work of securing its contents, attending to all its business details, and faced all the financial risks, subsidised by no publishing company, financed by no wealthy backing, and has so far done it successfully.

But now is the most critical time. Hundreds of newspapers and periodicals have been ruined and ceased to exist owing to the increased prices of paper. THE UNITARIAN MONTHLY is still financially sound, paying its way, with uncertain and varying return to its owner for his labour and responsibility. It is probably the only Unitarian periodical that pays its own way, and has done so from its first issue onwards. But of course it depends upon the support of Unitarian Churches and Societies, which order regular supplies of copies; upon individual subscribers, and upon those occasional advertisers who use its pages. There are great temptations in these days for churches which have adopted it as a congregational or parish magazine, in cutting down expenses, to exercise a false economy by cancelling their orders and ceasing to use the magazine as a connecting link amongst their members. If such a decision were to become general its continued existence would be imperilled, and its speedy extinction probably made certain. This would mean a loss to the Unitarian community of what has admittedly been a useful missionary agency. The magazine has served a large number of churches. It has gone into almost all parts of this kingdom, and to many distant parts of the world. It has evidently supplied a real need. The Editor has endeavoured to make it a good propagandist organ and a useful medium of denominational news; and as the need for such an organ is as great as ever, it would undoubtedly be a misfortune to our Unitarian movement if the Magazine could no longer be published.

In the interests of our churches and our cause the Editor has carried on this missionary work with but little return for himself, and hopes to be able to continue the issue of the Magazine for some years to come, or to secure its continuance in other hands. He thinks that his past efforts constitute a strong claim upon our churches and our people, and upon various denominational societies for their earnest co-operation and regular support. He trusts that the sacrifice will not be all on his side, but that churches will show a willingness to share the burden he has to carry by resolving to keep on using the Magazine and thus contribute to securing its permanent safety.

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NOTICE! The Magazine is published on the Thursday preceding the last Sunday of the expiring month.

Editor:

H. BODELL SMITH,

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